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SKUNKTOWN.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

“I HOPE, I do hope, our new cashier is coming out pretty smart, sir. Really, Mr Gresham, the responsibility does begin to weigh on me heavy. I never go to sleep now but I wake with a nightmare, because of the cash-box and the master-key to the safe.”

“And you would rather bid farewell to your temporary charge, and go back to the dockets and the copying, and double entry, and then dress for your evening promenade on Battery Walk, beside the Lake, where the beauty and fashion of Chicago chiefly congregate: is it not so, Mr Perry?” said I, laughing, as I looked up from my letters. Epaminnondas Bates Perry, a New-Englander, and a promising young clerk, whom we had converted into our acting cashier for the nonce, laughed also.

“You are about right, sir,” he said: “I do prefer safe routine-work, that I understand, to the fingering and locking up of all these dollars, with the anxiety that nothing shall be wrong with my accounts. Old Mr Fairford could do it, and never sleep a wink the less; but I cannot. I trust the cashier won’t be long out.”

“Well, no,” I answered, amused at the young Bostonian’s pertinacious desire to be relieved from his trust. “Mr Carthew was to sail in the *Star of the West*, which no doubt left Liverpool on the 27th ultimo. He will be here, even if he loiters a little in New York, within a week at latest. And then he will take care of all this money, in paper, Californian gold, and Mexican silver, the looking after which afflicts you so sorely.”

“Mr Robert Carthew has never been in America before?” asked the lad—he was no more in years—and, as I nodded assent, he added: “It is a good start for him, this. Fresh from the old country—England or France, it’s all one—and cashier to begin with, of our branch of the bank, out here in Skuntown.”

All day long, somehow, those words of the young clerk’s rang in my ears. It was certainly great

promotion for Mr Robert Carthew, at five or six and twenty, to leave the counting-house of the Bordeaux wine-merchant in whose employ he had been since he left Merchant Taylors’ School, and to come out to us as cashier with a salary of sixteen hundred dollars, to be annually increased. True, the young man was said to be a first-rate accountant, while of his excellent moral qualities there was not a doubt; but I had always had my suspicions that our new cashier was no Heaven-sent financial genius, but a plain plodding man of business at best. It was, at anyrate, much to his advantage to leave Cooper, Bertrand, and Cie. for our more lucrative post, while the rapidity with which we were extending our business ramifications, held out hopes of future gain to all concerned. English as our firm was, as regarded its foundation and original proprietorship, three-fourths of our clerks, tellers, and agents were Americans; and to a surety, we should not, on Mr Fairford’s resignation, have sought our new cashier on the banks of the Garonne, had he not been fortunate enough to possess a friend at court.

And in this wise. I, John Gresham, had, by dint of hard work and sheer good-luck, risen to be manager of the Chicago Branch of the Anglo-American Credit Bank, a large and thriving concern, and of which the transactions were by no means so speculative in character as the name would imply. We did make advances, but always on solid security; and our dealings, in every producing district of the Union, but notably in Pennsylvania, in California, and among the Prairie States of the North, had prospered. The Chicago Branch, although Chicago was far from having attained the wealth and population which she could boast before her late fearful trial, was one of the most hopeful; and here, perhaps, it may be as well to give an explanation of the name ‘Skuntown,’ by which, in familiar parlance, many native and foreign residents were accustomed to speak of a city, of the rapid growth and vast resources of which we were all proud.

Chicago is an Indian word, implying, in the Winnebago dialect of the Iroquois language, the

town, or more correctly village, of the skunks ; and this rude nickname had been assigned to the nascent city by those hardy hunters, white and red, who had been wont to trap the beaver and the musk-rat, where wharves and warehouses were so soon to take the place of reed-brakes and osier-beds haunted by wild-fowl. Tradition reported that the numbers of these unsavoury vermin which infested the site of our great emporium of Western commerce had been excessive, and savage and backwoodsman had alike jeered at the folly of the first founders of the settlement, which in so unpromising a spot was destined to such high fortunes. Hence the use of the once opprobrious word, Skunktown, had become with many of the inhabitants a subject of pride, akin to that which prompted the Florentine Medici to emblazon on shield and banner the three gilded pillars of the apothecary, from whom their sovereign house had sprung.

But Robert Carthew owed his appointment as our cashier to my influence with the Central Board at New York, and he had had my good word with the directors simply because I was in love with his sister. Young as Julia Carthew still was, ours had been a long engagement ; and it was for her sake that I had worked and saved, with a prudence not usual with men of my time of life, that I might have a fitting home to offer her, when we should at length be able to marry. Julia was an orphan, with no sister and no brother except Robert, whom I had never seen. She lived under the roof of her great-uncle, a very old and infirm pluralist, who was what is called a canon residentiary of Dulchester, and who, being tied by gout to his own easy-chair and his own fireside, did indeed seem likely to continue his residence in his official dwelling in the Close, till he should exchange it for a narrower home in the cathedral. Old Dr Cobham had held good preferment for a long time, and was reputed to be rich ; but neither Julia nor I had ever allowed ourselves to be dazzled by visions of wealth for ourselves, derived from his posthumous liberality. He was just the kind of man who, with relatives dependent on him, leaves all his hoarded thousands to his college or his chapter, and of whom every one says that such was precisely the will that he was always expected to make.

On one point, however, Julia was firm, and as I felt that she was right, I had not the heart to press her. Although I was now fairly well off, with a good salary, and some savings well invested, and could thus afford to maintain a wife, even in a place so expensive to young housekeepers as Chicago then was, my betrothed would not consent to leave her guardian to end his days among servants.

‘ He says little when I talk to him of you, and how you wish me to be with you in America ; but I believe it would imbibter, and perhaps shorten his few remaining days, were I to go away. I sometimes think that Uncle Cobham likes me more than he is himself aware of, perhaps. Once or twice, lately, his manner has been altered—almost gentle. The last attack of gout has, I am afraid, weakened him a good deal, though he refuses to allow the physician to continue his visits ; &c.

Poor Julia ! I could pretty well guess what a life she led, under the care of her crabbed and close-fisted old kinsman. He could not, at all events, live for ever, and I went on in hopes of seeing her more happy, loving, and beloved, than ever could

be her lot in that prim ecclesiastical household in Dulchester Close. In the meanwhile, I was glad to be of service to her brother, to whom she had always been attached, and of whose sterling worth she was proud.

The new cashier arrived. It is so very seldom that strangers of whom we have heard much answer to the mental portrait which our fancy has traced for them, that I was probably unreasonable and exacting in being disappointed as to ‘ Brother Bob,’ when the original of my highly imaginative likeness presented itself. I had pictured Robert Carthew as an awkward, well-meaning young man, with laborious habits of industry, but not gifted with a large share of active energy or pliancy of character. The new-comer was bolder, readier of speech, and more self-possessed than I had anticipated, and had the air of a man of the world. He looked older, too, by at least a year or two than I knew my future brother-in-law to be, but then there is no register of age so deceptive as the human countenance, and, after all, Robert had been earning his own livelihood since first he reached man’s estate. He was well and neatly dressed, and had the manners of a gentleman, while of his aptitude for business there could be no two opinions. Indeed, so rapidly did he master the details of his work, that I once told him laughingly that he must have been a cashier before.

It may seem strange, then, and capricious that, predisposed as I was to be his friend, I did not like Mr Carthew. I took myself roundly to task on the score of prejudice, but it was useless to reason with myself on that head. Julia’s brother might be—nay, must be—a model young man, and a paragon of excellence, and assuredly he was a capital clerk ; but I could not bring myself to entertain towards him the friendly feelings that I had hoped to do, nor take the pleasure in his society that I had anticipated. He was always perfectly polite, and exact in the performance of his duty ; but I doubt if his fellow-clerks liked him any better than I did, and this was the more singular, since he was one of those fluent, easy-mannered men whose stock of conversation and good-humour seems inexhaustible. He was a well-knit man of somewhat more than middle height, with a good set of features, a handsome square mouth, and beautifully white teeth. His eyebrows were very thick, and more arched than is usual ; and his eyes were of a pale gray, with the rare peculiarity of contracting and darkening at times, as those of a cat may be seen to do ; while his hair and whiskers were of a reddish tint. I remember writing a bantering letter to Julia on this subject, since she had uniformly described her brother to me as having ‘ fair hair and blue eyes ;’ a favourable account which I now set down to sisterly partiality.

In one respect our present cashier was unquestionably better fitted for his post than ever quiet, steady-going Mr Fairford, who measured all things by a standard exclusively British, had been. His activity was beyond all praise, and indeed, his constitution seemed to be proof against fatigue, since he thought nothing of a twenty-mile ride across to some prairie-farm, soon after sunrise, and was always ready after office hours to undertake any and every piece of extra work, in or out of the city. The cashier, manager, and heads of departments in such a concern as ours, are, or were at

the time of which I write, expected to attend to matters beyond the cognizance of an English banker. Our chief customers were the prairie-farmers; and as we were constantly making advances of cash to enable them to bring fresh land under tillage, or to add to their stock of sheep and cattle, it was necessary to have an intimate knowledge of the character and circumstances of the borrower. Then, too, since the corn-grower of the Prairie States is chary of parting with actual money, the tangible dollars that are to pay the costly labour of his hired men, we often found it needful to accept payment in 'produce,' and whichever of us conducted the bargain required to be a judge of cereals and live-stock, and to be well versed in the market-value of bread-stuffs."

Conceive the tribulations of an ordinary bank clerk who should be called upon to settle the private account of a customer who proposed to pay his debt in a mixed coinage of wheat and maize, of pickled pork, live hogs, wool, and Indian ponies! Or imagine the difficulty of computing how many golden heaps of huge amber-tinted corn-cobs, what number of strong but vicious draught-mules, and how many horned cattle would suffice to strike the balance of debit and credit! Custom had reconciled me to this primitive mode of transacting business, but, to my surprise, Robert appeared to take to it at once, and either he had really a faculty of valuing which deserved to be called intuitive, or his guesses were singularly fortunate, for he bought and sold with a success beyond that of his more experienced colleagues.

'A tidy man of business, sir, is your new cashier—a good judge, too, both of hogs and of oxen,' said an old settler to me one day in the bank parlour. 'He warn't ever down South, war he—Tennessee way, or perhaps Mississippi?'

'No,' I answered smiling. 'Mr Carthew's travels have not yet extended so far as the Big River. He has been but three or four months in America.'

'Ah, wall! guess I'm getting old,' said the farmer with a disappointed look; 'and yet there war many and many who used to crack up Sam Hillyer as heving a wonderful eye for a face he had once clapped sight on. That chap's happened back on me, it did, and yet I can't put a name to time or place—on'y it war somewhere South.'

I thought little or nothing of this at the time; but events were soon to occur that were to rehabilitate Mr Samuel Hillyer's reputation for an unerring memory. As weeks and months elapsed, my early prejudice against Julia's brother became very much dulled by habit, and although no very great liking supplied its place, I still did justice to Robert's untiring devotion to the interests of the Anglo-American Credit Bank.

One thing there was which displeased me in the conduct of our pattern cashier, and this was, that he appeared in a great measure insensible to his sister's regard for him, and ungrateful for her affection. More than once Julia, in her letters to me, sent some such injunction as: 'Do make that lazy Robert write,' or a more serious complaint that she never received a line from him now.—'And he was quite a charming correspondent—used to write me such long kind letters from France—but now he has forgotten his little sister, I think.'

I spoke repeatedly on the subject to Robert Carthew, but always received some evasive answer. He was busy. He would write to-morrow. He

had begun a letter, and would finish it. But he never kept his word, and I grew weary of urging him to do what the feelings of his own heart should have prompted. He did, indeed, take very little apparent interest in his sister, seldom mentioning her name, and never alluding to any early reminiscences connected with their past life at home.

'I was very much at school,' he said one day, 'and my sister is a good deal the younger of the two, as you know, Gresham. You must not think me indifferent to Julia's happiness, though, or unkind. If I could see her dear face again, I daresay the old memories that hard work has banished would come crowding back upon me.'

It was the first time that I had heard Robert speak of his sister with anything like interest or fondness, and I shook hands with him, and very heartily, and thought the better of him from that day forth.

It might have been some fortnight after this conversation that, just before sunset, Robert Carthew was sitting in the verandah of my private residence, a pretty cottage, with a garden, the very earth of which was supported on piles of seasoned timber, but in which the tulip-tree, the rose-laurel, the oleander, and the magnolia flourished royally, looking out upon the silver sheet of Lake Michigan. He had come to give me an account of a mission which he had undertaken, deep in the heart of the state of Wisconsin, and where he had compounded on easy terms with a borrower who was poor in money, but rich in Indian corn and pig-meat. 'Freight, insurance, and auction expenses all paid, I would wager that if we net a cent by it, we net three hundred dollars at the lowest. Corn is going up daily,' said Robert, a little boastfully, as he filled himself a glass of claret from a bottle that I had just uncorked.

'I am glad of it,' I replied cordially, 'and glad, too, my dear fellow, that you take so kindly to the details of a business life in the West. I have not had time lately to examine the cash-book, but I should say you must have a large amount in hand, what with notes and what with specie, considering the payments that have come in after harvest.'

'Yes, yes, pretty well for that!' answered Robert, with a ring of something like annoyance in his voice. I thought that the late appointed cashier, vain of his fire-new honours, was piqued at my interference with his duties, and I smiled as I rejoined: 'All right, Carthew! We will each of us attend to our own branch of the business. We must not forget, though, that early next month we shall have to make heavy remittances to headquarters, so that we must scrape together every available shilling before the fifth.'

'The fifth! I shall be ready before the fifth!' said Robert, chuckling, though why I could not guess, as he repeatedly replenished his glass.

'By the way,' said I, 'I hope nothing is amiss at home in England. It is some time since I received a letter from your sister. Julia is generally as punctual a correspondent as ever penned a line; but three mails have come in, one after another, and brought me nothing from her. You have no news of her, have you?'

'I—no; certainly not! What makes you ask me the question?' demanded Carthew, with a sudden fierceness of tone and manner which astonished even more than it displeased me.

Indeed, throughout this interview, it had appeared to me that the bearing of my future brother-in-law was peculiar, and at times almost offensive. His usual urbanity and self-control seemed to have given place to a strange boastfulness of tone and a reckless audacity of manner which I had never observed in him before. Had I not known the young man's history from boyhood as thoroughly as I did, I should have fancied that a strong, bad nature, long suppressed under the influence of powerful motives, was now beginning to assert itself afresh, as a half-frozen snake might lift its hideous head, and bare its venomous fangs, when its slow blood had been warmed by the genial glow of some hospitable hearth. But Carthew was Julia's brother, and I knew his life to have been one of frugal, blameless industry, while his present behaviour was most likely due to excitement and over-fatigue.

'Come, come, Robert,' I answered gently, 'I always tell you that you work yourself too hard in the service of the bank, and I shall turn doctor for once, and prescribe a little rest and relaxation. You have been riding much of late on those shadeless prairies, in the hot autumn sun, and rattling about afterwards in those horrid railway cars—which I wish our go-ahead cousins would find time to render somewhat more easy—until you have fairly earned a holiday. For the next two or three days I insist on it that you forget business altogether. Now, where shall we go this evening? I hear wonders of the new French *troupe* at the theatre; or if you prefer music, I have tickets for the grand concert of the German Choral Club. Which shall it be?'

The cashier's features worked for an instant or two in a very remarkable manner, and his colour, so far as I could distinguish in the fading light, changed quickly from red to pale, and then rose again. 'You are a good fellow, Gresham,' he said, in a thick husky voice, 'a good fellow; and if only I had had the chance, early in life, to fall among those of your sort; but it's too late to talk of that now.'

This last speech, uttered in a singular accent of regretful, almost of remorseful sullenness, was utterly incomprehensible to me; but while I was trying to guess its purport, I heard the sound of wheels, and a hack-carriage, with its drunken Irish driver and lean horses, came clattering and jingling down the irregularly paved street, and drew up at my garden gate. A young lady, closely veiled, and dressed in deep mourning, alighted from the rickety vehicle, and so did a tall, elderly female, in a shawl and bonnet of unmistakably British make. It needed not the luggage with which the hackney-coach was laden to shew that its passengers were strangers to Chicago.

'Does Mr Gresham live here?' said a sweet low voice, that sent a thrill through my heart as I heard its well-remembered music; and before the black boy, who was watering the geraniums in the garden, could reply, I rushed out, exclaiming: 'Julia! Julia!' and had both the dear girl's hands clasped in mine. 'You in America, in Chicago!' cried I, hardly able to speak for surprise. 'My darling, it seems as if it were a happy dream! Upon which Julia, who till that moment had been looking up in my face with love and trust shining in her bright honest eyes, let her head droop upon my shoulder, and began to sob.

'It seems so selfish,' she said through her tears—'so selfish to be happy as—as I am, and so soon after—' She did not finish the sentence, but glanced down at the black dress which she wore. By this time I had drawn her with me into the room which opened on the verandah, and commanded a view of the lake, and where I had left Robert. So preoccupied was I with the suddenness of Julia's arrival, that I did not immediately remark the absence of the latter.

'You have not forgotten my kind Hannah,' said Julia, calling my attention to her elderly companion, who, with her hands encumbered with shawls, cloaks, and other light articles of travelling gear, stood rigid and upright near the door. I shook hands with the faithful old servant willingly enough, but with a feeling of intense bewilderment. Had the spire of Dulchester cathedral walked bodily into the room, I should not have been much more astonished than at beholding this exemplary woman, who had probably never in her life before been a dozen miles from the minster of her native town. 'Hannah would come too, dear old thing,' said Miss Carthew, as she remarked my surprise; 'and what a comfort it was to me to have her with me on the long journey, you may easily guess. But surely I mentioned this when I wrote last?'

'Perhaps you did, my love,' I answered; 'but in that case you have outstripped your letter, for I never heard even that you were to cross the Atlantic.'

'Then you did not expect me?' said Julia, after some more words had been exchanged. 'That is very strange, for I wrote four, if not five, letters at the least, between the time of poor Uncle Cobham's fatal seizure and my own departure from Dulchester. I wrote to Robert too.'

'It is very strange. I never knew the post to play such pranks before,' said I in perplexity, 'for not one of those letters reached me. It would almost seem as if some one had intercepted them, and yet, for what conceivable object?—By-the-bye, what has become of Robert? He was here a minute since!' And I looked around, but did not see Julia's brother anywhere. 'Why, this is odd indeed,' resumed I, 'for we were together when your carriage drew up before the gate, and he must surely have known your voice as soon as I did, yet he has slipped away. Perhaps he was ashamed of his dusty riding-boots and uncouth attire, and has gone to his lodgings to dress; or possibly he was conscious that he merited a little sisterly scolding for not answering your letters, Julia.'

Julia's lip quivered, and the tears rose to her eyes again, but she tried to laugh. 'I shall scold Bob, and very severely too, when he *does* come back,' she said. 'The lazy fellow never wrote me—would you believe it?—one line, even to tell me where his lodgings are, so that I could go to him on arriving! That was the reason that I drove here at once from the railway station, and frightened you so heartily, merely to ask Robert's address, you know.'

We agreed, however, that Julia must, of course, await the truant's return; and while the dusky members of my slender household busied themselves in relieving Hannah of her load of wrappings, and in hospitably pressing upon her tea, with the unfamiliar adjuncts of hominy, waffle-cakes, sweet-cake, venison-colllops, and pumpkin-pie, of some of which she partook at a side-table,

her young mistress and I conversed with all the eager interest that none but lovers, who have been long kept apart by rolling seas and broad lands, could rival or appreciate. Neither of us had ever entertained a doubt of the other's faith and constancy, but still there was an exchange of those assurances of unfailing affection, those playful reproaches, and that fond mockery of doubt, of which those who breathe and those who hearken to them never seem to tire, but a repetition of which would weary the most omnivorous reader.

Julia's uncle, or rather great-uncle, old Dr Cobham, had died after a short illness, and, contrary to what both she and I had anticipated, he had bequeathed the bulk of his savings to her.

'Poor Uncle Cobham was not so rich as he was supposed to be,' said Julia. 'Indeed, the lawyer, Mr Tapes, said that he had lost a good deal by some speculative investment or other—Araucanian nine per cents. I think he called it. But, excepting two thousand pounds to my brother, and a few small legacies, he has left all to me; and I—I wished to tell you my own self, John, and not by letter, that your little wife will not come to you empty-handed, my poor boy, after all your waiting and working to make a home for her.'

We had so much to say, and it was so pleasant to us both to be together again, that minutes succeeded to minutes, and the minute-hand of the clock had nearly made its way twice round the dial before Hannah recalled us to a consciousness of our position by respectfully remarking that it was very late, and that, since the hack-carriage had long been waiting, it would perhaps be better to drive without further delay to 'Mr Robert's' lodgings. The mention of this name made me start.

Robert! Yes, I had forgotten. 'Why, in the name of all that is incomprehensible, Julia, what can your brother be about? He is here when you arrive; he steals away as if to avoid you, and he never comes back! There has been no quarrel between you two, surely, my love?' said I, as I rose to ring for candles, since, but for the broad moonlight, it was now quite dark.

No, there had been no quarrel. Julia admitted that she had been hurt by her brother's unkind persistency in not replying to her letters, but she had never penned a word of blame to him, and had come to Chicago in the full confidence of his brotherly love and protection.

'This is a most extraordinary thing,' said I, much annoyed.—'Sam!' for the negro lad had now appeared with the lights, 'run to Mr Carthew's rooms, in Fifth Block, Upper Avenue, and see if he is ill. If not, beg him from me to do me the favour to step down to the cottage. I never knew him to behave so mysteriously before. Why, he must have almost brushed against you and Hannah as he went out! I wonder you did not see him.'

'I did see a gentleman, sir, or at least a person, in outlandish-looking boots of tan-coloured leather, and a straw-hat, hurrying out, but it was not Mr Robert,' returned Hannah.

'It must have been; no one else was there. Depend upon it, Hannah, that you were deceived by the outlandish boots and the planter's hat of coarse straw.'

'I could not have been deceived, sir,' replied the imperturbable Hannah, 'for I saw the gentleman's face as plain as I see yours now. He was no more Mr Bob than I am.'

'I saw nobody,' said Julia; 'but if Bob could have passed me in that way, like a stranger, he must be sadly changed from the kind brother that I have always known him.'

I was puzzled, but unconvinced. That Carthew had been with me, and that he must have been the person whom Hannah had encountered in the garden, these were points on which I could no more doubt than on that of my own identity. But, supposing him to be sane, his conduct was such as I could by no conceivable hypothesis account for. I knew that the coloured boy, Sam, was prompt in the execution of an errand, and I waited that messenger's return with more anxiety than I cared to acknowledge.

'Come, come,' said I as gaily as I could; 'depend upon it, when Robert does put in an appearance, we shall hear that some trifling incident has caused the delay—some unexpected call of business, perhaps, for we are not so precise about office-hours as you are in England. Or the poor fellow may be unwell; he has worked hard lately, and has ridden many a mile under a sun such as never shone on Dulshire, Mrs Hannah. And, by-the-bye, here is a photograph of him,' added I, carelessly picking up a *carte-de-visite* that lay on a side-table: 'tell me if he is much altered.'

'If who is much altered?' asked Julia, in blank surprise, as she held the photograph nearer to the light.

'Who! Why, my dear girl, whom could I possibly have been speaking of, except Robert?' said I, smiling. 'You are not going to disclaim your nearest and dearest, even in photography, are you?'

'Dear John,' exclaimed my betrothed, rising from her chair in great agitation, 'you are not laughing at me? No; I see that you are not. Can there possibly be some mistake? Are you sure that the original of this portrait is the man who—calls himself my brother?'

Of course, I was quite sure. I had myself recommended the photographer, had seen the cards when wet from the press, and could vouch for the likeness as being fairly up to the average standard. But, to my amazement, Julia, stoutly backed by the faithful old servant, earnestly protested that the portrait in no respect resembled her brother Robert, save in so far that it was that of a man of the same build and age. Hannah, on the other hand, was positive that the likeness was that of the booted man who had passed her in the garden—'only that he had a wicked look about the eyes, that one had, and here he simmers quite good-natured like.' Before I could unravel this tangled thread of evidence, Sam the negro lad, accompanied by Fritz Klopstock, our German porter at the bank, burst breathless in.

'Ach Himmel! Mr Gresham, I much fear we are stolen!' exclaimed the trusty, gray-haired old Holsteiner, whom twenty years in America had not sufficed to perfect in his English idioms.

'Robbed!' answered I, half incredulous. 'But how, and by whom?'

'Please, master,' put in Sam, taking advantage of the old man's lack of breath, 'Mr Carthew been home to lodgings—pack some things, so landlady say—change him clothes—jump into hack-car, and drive off like mad to station of Michigan Railway. Sam coming back, meet Mr Klopstock. He say bank rob by big tief—gen'leman off with de gold!'

'It is true! So! We have much lost!' groaned old Fritz. 'Teufelsbrod of a swindler! he is gone.'

Swindler! The word acted like a match applied to a train of gunpowder, and a sudden light broke in upon me, confirming my previous hazy suspicions, and shewing me how completely, how pitifully I had been the dupe of a daring and dexterous impostor. Not Robert Carthew, after all! Not Julia's brother! but merely a specious knave trading on a false name and an assumed character, a carriage kite dressed up in the sober plumes of some useful tenant of the poultry-yard! The porter's tale was simple enough. Mr Carthew had come to the bank, had written a letter in the parlour, and had desired Fritz to carry it immediately to its destination, which was at the opposite extremity of Chicago, and to bring back an answer in writing. The porter had demurred, his especial duty being to watch over the valuables in the strong-room; but on the cashier's repeated and peremptory order he had complied, Mr Carthew promising to keep good guard in his absence. Fritz, on returning from his bootless errand, for no such person as that to whom the letter was addressed was known in Madison Street, had found the door locked, and on opening it with his pass-key had discovered that Mr Carthew was gone, the strong-room open, iron safes and chests gaping wide, letters, bank-notes, books, and valuable securities strewed pell-mell over the floor, and all the balance in coined gold obviously carried off.

What was to be done? Julia and I looked at each other with dismay. It was late, and Miss Carthew had now no roof to shelter her, nor any legitimate protector under whose charge she could remain. She had come out intending to be her brother's guest until she should become my wife; and now things had turned out in a manner that was, to say the least of it, awkward. However, America is fortunately a most hospitable country, and I had many friends in the town. Late as it was, in little more than half an hour's time, Julia and her faithful Hannah were safe under the care of a most kind and worthy family, who made their young visitor as welcome as if they had known her from infancy, while I was free to attend to my plain duty towards my employers.

'I must hunt this man down, and recover the property, if I follow him to Mexico,' muttered I, as I made the best of my way to the head police office, the superintendent of which was slightly known to me.

Up to this time, Julia and I had both been too much flurried to marvel what had become of the real Robert Carthew.

THE LAND OF DESOLATION.

It is related in an old chronicle that, on a gloomy night in the month of July 1585, the ship *Sunshine*, of fifty tons, fitted out by divers opulent merchants of London, for the discovery of a north-west passage, came, in a thick and heavy mist, to a place where there was a mighty roaring as of waves dashing on a rocky shore. The captain, one John Davis, put off in a boat, and thereby discovered that his ship was 'embayed in fields and hills of ice, the crashing together of which made the fearful sounds that he had heard.' The ship drifted helplessly through the night, and when the morning dawned, 'the people saw the

tops of mountains white with snow, and of a sugar-loaf shape, standing above the clouds, while at their base the land was deformed and rocky, and the shore was everywhere beset with ice, which made such irksome noise that the land was called "The Land of Desolation."

On a gloomy night in the month of July 1869, the ship *Panther*, from St John's, of three hundred tons, fitted out for a summer voyage by a party of American gentlemen in pursuit of pleasure, came in like manner to a place where there was a mighty roaring as of waves dashing on a rocky shore; and when the morning dawned, the captain, one John Bartlett, and the people on board knew that their ship had drifted to the self-same spot where the *Sunshine* had drifted nearly three hundred years before, and that the land before them was Davis's 'Land of Desolation.' The ship was an unusually strong-built Newfoundland screw-steamer, and the captain, who was her half-owner, was a brave, clever, cheerful, and determined man.* Daylight shewed them an island of rock on one side, an island of ice on the other, a terrific, deafening sea; they had drifted within a line of skerries, and they did not know within fifty miles where they were. They had made the land with the intention of seeking a modern fishing-station of Danes and Esquimaux which they knew lay somewhere on that coast, but where they could not guess: there was no harbour, no lighthouse, no pilot, on that grim, inhospitable coast of the northernmost country of the world. They were not so much alarmed as to be unable to appreciate the grandeur of the situation and its associations. They had heard of that mysterious land as the home of an ancient people, whose fleets of ships traversed the waters bearing merchandise to hamlets of peace and plenty. Where had their homes been? All before and around the wanderers were sterile rocks and desert wastes of ice, behind the dark cliffs which rose above them abruptly from the sea. The dimly seen interior was a vast plain of desolate whiteness, whereon lay piled the snow of ages. A tempest of rain, hail, snow, and wind raged about the ship, the creaking and groaning ice was around them everywhere, and an occasional iceberg of enormous magnitude broke through the gloom, and, while moving on through the angry and troubled waters, received with cold indifference the fierce lashings of the sea.

The *Panther* got out of this difficulty, and reached Julianashaab in safety, but what they had experienced was an appropriate introduction to Greenland, which abounds in historic and legendary interest. Julianashaab is a neat, cleanly, industrious, purely Danish town, standing alone on the spot where Eric the Red and his followers founded an independent state nine centuries ago. A few ruins are the only traces of the five hundred years' existence of the peaceful Christian people who maintained themselves, undisturbed by the elements of discord that afflicted the world elsewhere; and the fiord on which the little colony stands is called Igalliho, or 'the fiord of the deserted homes,' and is like the great fiords of Norway, with the addition of a huge spreading glacier, which descends into it, as similar glaciers descend into similar

* *The Land of Desolation; being a Personal Narrative of Adventure in Greenland.* By Isaac J. Hayes, M.D. Author of *The Open Polar Sea*; &c. Sampson Low & Co.

fiords all along the coast of the Land of Desolation. The Icelandic Sagas tell us the story of Eric the Red and his people, but other record of them there is only one, in the small spot of earth where the mountains keep back the frozen flood from Eric'sfiord, and which is thus made fit for human habitation, a patch of green in a wilderness of ice. In a few lines, Dr Hayes tells the story of the settlement; that of its dispersion, who shall tell? Only the mysterious forces of nature can solve that mystery. The settlement grew and prospered. Norwegians, Danes, Icelanders, people from the Hebrides, from the British Isles, from Ireland, and even from the south of Europe, came there in ships to trade. Ambitious and adventurous men searched up and down the coast for other fields whereon to display their enterprise. How far north the most adventurous went, we cannot certainly know; but Rafn places one of their expeditions in latitude 75°, a point to which the stoutest ships of modern times cannot now go without encountering serious risk. And all this was ventured eight hundred years ago, in half-decked ships and open boats. It is positively known that one of their expeditions reached as far as Upernivik, latitude 73° 50', a stone having been discovered there in 1824, by Sir Edward Parry, bearing the following inscription in Runic characters: "Erling Sivaghtson and Bjorn Thordasson and Eindrid Oddson, on Saturday before Ascension Week, raised these marks and cleared ground. 1135." Think of clearing ground in Greenland up in latitude 72° 50'!

"In evidence of the change in climate since then, we observe that in the old chronicles of those ancient Northmen there is very little mention made of ice as a disturbing element in navigation. From the glaciers come the icebergs, and a fiord which receives a glacier is not habitable. The colony was destroyed by the Skraelings, savages now represented by the Esquimaux, who have held undisturbed possession of the country until now, when they are dwindling away." There is no story of ruin and decay more sad than this; the ruthless hand of nature has nowhere pressed so heavily upon the children of men. The little town in the wilderness is a quaint, happy place, where everybody is and smells more or less fishy, where the women wear fur boots and trousers, do not know that petticoats exist, but are as fond of jewellery as their southern sisters, and perfect adepts in dancing and flirtation. The little company on board the *Panther* had a pleasant time of it in the 'fiord of the deserted homes,' before they steamed away southward to that of Sermittialik, which means 'the place of ice,' there to witness phenomena such as are not to be seen elsewhere in the whole known world.

In Greenland the snow falls dry. The mountains are lofty, it never rains upon them, and a fresh layer of snow is laid upon them every year. Enormous quantities break loose and roll down the mountain-sides in avalanches, but the amount is small in comparison with the deposit. The glaciers are the means of drainage of these great snow-fields, which are turned to ice by a very simple process, and the ice flows to the sea. In many places in this awful country, the valleys are so filled that they have become level with the summits of the mountains, and there is a desert waste of whiteness, smooth as the sea, and void of life as Sahara.

'I ascended once to such a level plane,' says Dr Hayes, 'reaching eighty miles from the coast, at an altitude of five thousand feet. I was set upon by a tempest. The temperature sank to 34° below zero. Nothing could possibly be more terrible than a wind under such conditions, except, perhaps, a furnace-blast. Mercury hardened almost to the consistency of lead. The moisture of the breath froze on the beard in solid lumps of ice. The drifting snow which came whirling along the icy plane was like the sand-clouds of the desert, which oftentimes overwhelmed travellers. There was no chance for life except in flight. It would be difficult to inflict greater torture upon a man than to expose him to such a storm. First comes alarm, then pain, then lack of perception. One of my comrades said: "I cannot go any farther. I do not want to; I am sleepy; I cannot walk." Another said: "I am no longer cold; I am quite warm again; shall we not camp?" There was great need of haste and exertion, or we should all have perished. The whole continent of Greenland is, say, twelve hundred miles long by six hundred broad. This gives seven hundred and twenty thousand square miles of superficial area; and assuming the ice, which covers the greater part of it, to have the very moderate average depth of five hundred feet, we have a grand total of seventy thousand cubic miles of ice. All this vast accumulation is the property of Denmark.'

The *Panther* steamed up the great fiord of Sermittialik, making straight for the glacier which fills up the valley beyond the fiord, which is two miles wide. For ten miles the banks of the fiord continue to be the banks of the glacier, then they vanish to a wedge-like point, and merge into the great *mer de glace*, which, expanding to the right and left above the highest hills, carries the eye away upon its boundless surface as upon the ocean. At length the inclined plane is lost; and the distant line of the *mer de glace* is lost also, and the explorers are beneath a line of ice-cliffs from a hundred to two hundred feet high, as clear as the purest crystal, and emblazoned with all the hues of heaven. No explorers ever had such an opportunity of examining a glacier, for this magnificent one is quite accessible. The water is quite deep in front of it, and the icebergs float away as fast as they are formed. As they slowly crossed the fiord, in front of the glacier-wall, they had ample leisure to enjoy its fantastic collection of forms—caves that are apparently limitless, peaks like church spires in symmetry, Gothic arches, clefts that wind away until they are lost in deep blue. 'In this blue,' says the writer, 'we see the most perfect of all transparent hues, changing, too, with every moment, and subtle as the colours of the opal. The green of the caves is not less beautiful. This green is observed wherever the ice overhangs the water. In the sunlight, the surface is pure white, except where there has occurred a recent fracture; and the effect is that of the most delicate satin, in all its changes of surface, produced by the different angles in which the light is reflected to the eye.'

They found good anchorage, made the strong and sturdy *Panther* safe, and then the captain and Dr Hayes set out to explore the glacier which has spread desolation over the scene of an ancient civilisation. It was a wonderfulfeat, not accomplished without much suffering and deadly peril, but one full of awe and interest. Dr Hayes fully

realised the rapid growth and ceaseless motion of the terrific mass of solid substance which moves in obedience to the same laws which govern the movement of fluids, when he found himself in an ice-caveri, listening to the waters rushing to the sea, in the identical spot where, fifty years before, an old man, who had accompanied them from Julianashaab, told him he had gathered whortleberries, and had walked across the valley in front of the glacier. He pointed out the then line of the glacier front, and Dr Hayes calculates from that, that the movement has been, from that time to the present, seven inches daily, the advance being over two miles. With the wonderful scene before his eyes, he thus traces the history of the great glacier. 'Going back to the time when it first emerged from the mer de glace (to the time when the ice first began to bulge downward into the valley which it now fills completely), we see the valley clothed with verdure, sparrows chirruping among the branches of the stunted trees, herds of reindeer browsing upon its abundant pastures, and drinking from a stream of limpid water, which, melting from the glacier, pours down over the same precipices, and through the same defiles which the ice now fills and covers. This must have been about two hundred and fifty years ago, since the distance from the sea to where the break occurs in the mountain-chain through which the ice-stream emerges into the valley is about ten miles. We see it then just appearing, and we watch its progress through this long time. Its front is hundreds of feet high, and miles across. We observe the icy flood moving steadily and irresistibly onwards, over precipices, down steep declivities, upon level plains—sometimes advancing with comparative rapidity, sometimes slowly, but steadily, year by year, coming towards the fiord. We see it swallowing up rocks and pastures; we see the deer retire farther and farther down the valley with each returning year; we see the hillocks within the valley overwhelmed with the flood of ice, the crystal stream pouring over and around them, as if it were some semi-fluid substance; we hear the cracking of the ice as the strain here and there becomes too great; and we hear, too, the echoing sound of the avalanche of ice and snow, crumbling from its front, and crashing down into the plain beneath. We thus watch the ice-stream until the front of it has reached the fiord. But here it does not stop. The bed of the sea is but a continuation of the same inclined plane as the bed of the valley, and its onward course is continued. It pushes back the water; it makes a coast-line of ice where there had been a beach; and a white wall now stretches from one side of the fiord to the other. As it flows onward, it gets into deeper and deeper water, its foot still resting on the bottom of the sea. Thus the icy wall sinks gradually down as it moves along, and, in course of time, it has almost gone out of sight. Then it gets beyond its depth. When fresh ice floats freely in sea-water, there is one-eighth of it above the surface to seven-eighths below. If the glacier should project far enough out into the sea to present more than this proportion, then the buoyancy of the water will lift the end of the ice-stream until it attains its natural equilibrium. To do this, of course, a break must occur, as the ice will not bend. But, for a long time, the continuity of the ice is not interrupted—so great are its depth and width. But finally it is

compelled to give way; the force applied becomes too great for its powers of resistance. A crack, beginning at the bottom, is opened, with a fearful crash. The crack widens, and when it is completed to the top, a fragment is detached. This fragment is buoyed up to its proper level, and while the loud noise of the disruption is echoing among the hills, and the great waves of its creating are rolling away, the monstrous mass is coming slowly to rest, ready to float off with the current to the ocean. This fragment, as we have already seen, is the *iceberg*. Its birth is attended with the most violent disturbance of the sea and air, and presents a magnificent spectacle.'

The Greenlanders say, when the awful sound apprises them of the breaking off of a fragment, that the glacier is going to 'calve.' Dr Evans was a spectator once of such an event, in a fiord far north of Sermitsialik, in company with a man named Philip, a dweller in the most northern inhabited spot on the earth's surface, Upernavik; and he describes the wild, ungainly gambols of the new-born child of the arctic forests, when tossed like a toy into the sea among its rocking and tumbling brethren, the tremendous commotion of the waters, and the awful concert of thundering sound, as overwhelmingly grand. This is one of the most sublime exhibitions of the great forces of nature; and the contrast of the restlessness and turmoil with the total absence of animal and human life, must be deeply impressive. The voyagers of the *Panther* were destined to behold a spectacle as wonderful, perhaps, and fraught with appalling danger to themselves. This was the disintegration of a huge mass of the great glacier of the fiord of Sermitsialik, one splendid spire of ice, four hundred feet high, which stood out—detached from the multitude of spires and arches of such exquisite and symmetrical form as no one can conceive who has not seen them—almost from the sea-line to its summit. In the grass-green water, this marvellous crystal shaft could be traced a long way into the sea. The marvel was preceded by a loud terrible noise, which turned every eye upon the great spire in advance of the glacier. 'The sound,' says our author, 'was as though the foundations of the earth had given way, and the spire seemed to be descending into the yawning depths below. It did not topple over, and fall headlong, but went down bodily, and in doing so crumbled into numberless pieces. The process was not instantaneous; the spire broke up as if it were composed of scales, the fastening of which had given way, layer after layer, until the very core was reached, and there was nothing left of it. In a few moments, the whole glacier became enveloped in spray, a semi-transparent cloud, through which the crumbling of ice could be faintly seen. Then the summit of the spire sank away amid the great white mass of foam and mist. Other spires, less perfect in their form, disappeared in the like manner, and great scales peeling from the glacier in various places, fell into the sea with a prolonged crash, followed by a loud hissing and crackling sound. Then, in the general confusion, all particular reports were swallowed up in a peal compared with which the loudest thunder of the heavens would be but a feeble sound. The whole glacier was enveloped in a cloud, through which, while the fearful sound was pealing forth, I saw a blue mass rising, at first slowly, and then with a

bound, and now, from out the foam and mist, a wave of vast proportions rolled away in a widening semicircle. The wave came down upon us with the speed of the wind. The swell occasioned by an earthquake can alone compare with it in magnitude. It rolled beneath the *Panther*, lifted her upon its crest, and swept her towards the rocks. An instant more, and I was flat upon the deck, borne down by the stroke of falling water. Another and another came in quick succession, but each was smaller than the one preceding it. The *Panther* was driven within two fathoms of the shore, but she did not strike. Our anchor held, or our ship would have been knocked to pieces, or landed high and dry with the first great wave that rolled under us.'

After all this terrible confusion had subsided, and half-a-dozen new icebergs, each like a mammoth *lapis lazuli*, set in a sea of chased silver, were floating off to join their brethren in Baffin's Bay, the voyagers landed and held a picnic on the glacier, from which they were hunted by clouds of mosquitoes, of a number and viciousness unknown to southern climes. They had nearly accomplished the purpose of their voyage now. They had seen the Land of Desolation; revelled in its solemn, majestic, awfully solitary beauty; beheld the most wonderful of the operations of nature in her grandest solitudes; and now it only remained for them to record the fact of their presence there; and after that, they would set sail for the Arctic Circle, for the melancholy, mystical region where the sun 'doth shine for half the year.' So they selected a convenient spot on the summit of the great glacier, and there they planted the banner of the 'Stars and Stripes.' They returned all silent to the *Panther*, picked up their anchor, and steamed down the fiord, the wonderful ice-stream, which had afforded them so many adventures, melting away in the gathering twilight of the evening.

A WOMAN'S VENGEANCE.

CHAPTER VI.—OTHELLO CHARMED DESDEMONA WITH THE TALE OF HIS ADVENTURES.

If the beauties of the river had been approved of before lunch, we may be sure they were now doubly appreciated. Mrs Somers, it is true, 'overcome' by the warmth of the weather, had dropped asleep, but it was only to dream of them. She thought she was in a fairy shallop with the Rev. Mr Bung, whose weight, combined with her own, sent the prow of the boat up (as it probably would have done in real life) heavenwards; and now the good man pointed to the firmament, praising it in his smooth, patronising way; and now he dipped his curved hand into the stream, and offered it to her like a cup; and she accepted it 'gladly, for the waters of that river were green Curaçoa.' Helen was dreaming too, and likewise a dream of bliss. Her ears drank in the music of her lover's voice, and her hand clasped his beneath the table; and yet she had eyes for the fair sights which met them upon every hand, and a pleasant 'Yes, indeed,' for Jack Adair, when, pipe in mouth, he would raise himself upon his elbow from the bench on which he lay reclined, and point out some object for her admiration. Mr Allardyce's mind was much exercised in making cigarettes; but when the demand was temporarily supplied—that

is, when he was smoking them—there is every reason to suppose, since he stared at the river a good deal, that he also was regarding it with satisfaction.

'How very, very beautiful is nature!' sighed Helen: it was not at all characteristic of her to be sentimental; but the ejaculation, though conventional enough, was really genuine, and won from her by what she beheld.

'Very much so,' said Jack, feeling called upon to say something himself, since nobody else spoke, and, of course, not aware that Arthur had squeezed her hand, which was all she wanted in the way of acquiescence.

'So calm, so gentle, so sympathising with humanity,' continued Helen, answering the squeeze with a soft pressure.

'Well, I don't know about *that*,' laughed Jack, who was truth (not to say matter-of-fact) itself. 'I think Arthur could tell you another story.'

'Eh, what!' cried Mrs Somers, aroused by Jack's stentorian tones. 'Is Arthur going to tell us another story? I'm all attention; I have not been asleep. I only wish I could sometimes get a wink or two of sleep in the middle of the day. How nice everything looks! I've got quite to like the wabble, wabble, wab—' In her ample bosom sunk her double-chin; above it, her head nodded once or twice, like a hammer beating in a nail, and she once more rejoined the Rev. Bung.

'Why should Arthur think that nature is unsympathising?' inquired Helen.

'Make him tell you with his own— I mean in his own words,' replied Jack, who was the soul of propriety, and thought 'lips' under the circumstances, would be indelicate.

'Tell me, Arthur,' said Helen softly. 'Or are you asleep?' added she, a little louder, and not without a touch of reproach.

Arthur Tyndall was not asleep, yet he had not heard her. He was in what is called—I know not why—a 'brown-study.' Men that have travelled much are subject to them; something that occurs around them—a sight, a sound, a scent even—will suddenly carry away their minds to distant scenes, and abstract them wholly from the present. It was not a distant scene in this case, it was a home scene—one, too, that he was nearing every instant—but it was a bygone one, bygone for ever, as he thought; and such have their attraction for us all.

'Asleep?' said he, rousing himself with effort. 'No, indeed; or if I was,' he added in a low tone, 'I was dreaming of you.' *You liar!* whispered a little voice—that of Conscience, which, fortunately, is so still and small, that it is a quite rare feat even to make its owner hear it, much less another.

Helen gave one of her purrs of pleasure. The Hon. Wynn Allardyce heard it, or, at all events, understood, by the expression of her features, that she was purring, and scowled under cover of his cigarette smoke. He had no chance now, at all events for the present, of coming between these two fond hearts; the herb valerian (as I have, unfortunately, had occasion more than once to remark) is very powerful with females, but pales before the unfolded Rose of Love.

'You shall not be so lazy, Arthur,' exclaimed Helen, a consciousness that 'those horrible men' might imagine she was 'spooning' suddenly endowing her with vitality. 'Come, let us have your story.'

I believe that Jack must have guessed how matters were with his friend, for he came to the rescue with : 'That shipwreck story, Tyndall. I was telling Miss Somers that nature hadn't always sympathised with you.'

'Oh, it's nothing,' said Arthur; 'that is, the story isn't. But it's quite true what Jack says—nature pleases herself—if she pleases us, so much the better for us; but she doesn't go out of her way to do it—not she. I was once a passenger on board a ship that was burned in the North Pacific. We talk of "leaving home" as being a painful experience; but when home leaves us, when one sees the vessel that has been our ark of safety for long months in wind and storm, go down before one's eyes into the Deep, a sheet of fire—that is leaving home indeed. It was quite calm when the thing happened, so that we were all enabled to take to the boats, but it was not less terrible to see, on that account. I shall never forget the hiss of the waveless sea as the burning mass went under, nor the darkness, which it had illumined, that closed over us as it did so. It seemed to be a full five minutes before we saw the stars; yet there they were, shining down upon us as daintily as they will shine upon this pleasure-boat to-night, with the thin fleecy clouds sailing in and out among them; and they would have shone all the same, we may be sure, had we all been burned alive in our lost ship, and gone under with it. So, you see, Helen, that nature is not quite so sympathetic as you take her to be.'

'Go on, Arthur; pray, go on. What did you do?'

'Well, we did the best we could, which was not much. In the first place, we counted our provisions. No petty trader ever knew so well what articles he had in store as we did, every man of us; for we were a thousand miles from the nearest land, and every ounce of food and every spoonful of water might be worth its weight in gold. We had four hams, and twenty-eight pounds of pork; twelve two-pound cans of oysters and preserved meats; six bushels of raw potatoes (which rotted very fast, by-the-bye, and were of small service to us); but sixteen gallons of water; three bottles of brandy; and one hundred pounds of tobacco.'

'That seems a great deal, too,' said Helen.

'Yes,' murmured Jack; 'I have heard of nothing like such provision since the list of stores in Robinson Crusoe's care.'

'Yes, my good fellow, but that was for one man's benefit,' said Arthur gravely, 'and we were thirty-one, and a thousand miles from land. Two of us, it is true, were sick, and had not much appetite, but what they had, poor fellows, was never satisfied. It is no exaggeration to say that what Jones yonder took to-day at lunch to his own cheek would have lasted him a week on board our boat. We were put on short allowance from the first, of course; each man being allowed but a morsel of salt pork (or a little piece of potato, if he preferred that), and half a sea-biscuit, three times a day. It took seven of those sea-biscuits to weigh a pound. For the first two days, only a gill of water was served out to each; but for a fortnight afterwards there was almost incessant rain, which we caught in canvas, and stored in every place that would hold water, even to our boots. Those were luxurious days, when we had plenty of water, for thirst, as we afterwards discovered, is even harder

to bear than the pangs of hunger; though, as to that, when folks talk of "wanting objects in life," and prate about having "nothing to look forward to," I often think of those first few days, when we were less used to starve, and how, after the morning fragment was consumed, we counted the hours till noon and night should bring with them another meal. A time did come when most of us, perhaps all of us, would have given up every chance of prosperity in this world—I had almost said, of happiness in the next—for half a loaf of bread and a cup of water; when all the riches of the world, and the pride of life—all that Art and Learning have ever done for the human race—had become absolutely valueless; when civilisation was a dead letter, and our hearts and wishes were all, as it were, "fried down" to those two rude desires, Food and Drink.'

'Did you talk much?' asked Helen.

'Not at first; most of us were too down-hearted. We only looked at one another, and searched the sea for the sail that never came.'

'And thought, I suppose, of Home?'

'Sometimes. I have seen this very river, for example, with its green banks and shady groves, as plainly as I see it now, though the tropic sun poured down on us its fiery darts, and the sea itself shone around us like molten metal. I heard the flap of the sail, the cool dip of the oar: the ripple of this rushing stream mocked my parched lips. It was not Home, you see, so much as water, of which I dreamed.—I am afraid you must think me a savage, Helen.'

If she did, it was easy to read in her admiring eyes that she thought him a very Noble one.

'On the contrary,' said Jack, 'you were more like an alderman, always thinking of eating and drinking. But, pray, get on to where you devoured the two sick men.'

Helen gave a stifled shriek of horror, and Allardeyce looked up for the first time from his cigarette manufacture with a gleam of interest in his languid face.

'Did you eat them raw?' inquired he.

'We did not eat them at all,' said Tyndall, 'as Jack very well knows.'

'Oh, how could you, Mr Adair!' remonstrated Helen.

'I beg your pardon for the disappointment,' answered the Incorrigible One.—'Paddle on, Tyndall.'

'Next to food, the hope of being picked up was the subject of our thoughts, and even of our dreams, when we did dream, for we slept but little. The nights were very dismal and lonesome, especially (as mostly happened) when there were no stars: as we had no lantern, too, we could not even see the compass.'

'How did you steer the boat?' inquired Allardeyce, languidly expelling a thin spiral of smoke.

'It travelled easy, and we steered by the feel of the wind in our faces, and by the heave of the sea. I have abused the stars; but I am bound to say that the North Star, though I still contend that he only came out for his own convenience!—

'O Arthur!' interrupted Helen.

'I don't say, my dear Helen, that he would not have come out for yours,' continued Tyndall coolly; 'but as for us, who, I daresay, did not deserve it, he was not very considerate. When we did catch a fleeting glimpse of him, however, we made the

most of it, instantly lighting a match and examining the compass to see that we kept our course. On the fifth day, we caught a dolphin, which we warmed by means of a fire made in a tin plate, and divided among all hands.'

'Did it change into all kinds of beautiful colours when it died, Arthur?'

'Not that I remarked, my dear: it only struck me how very little there was of it, though it had to go such a great way. We caught seven more in all, and a bonita. After that, we caught no more, and began to starve. On the eighth day, our rations were reduced one half. Breakfast—an ounce of ham, one gill of water; dinner—same quantity of bread and water, with four oysters.'

'Ah,' said Allardye, 'in London one eats oysters for an appetite, which you could not have wanted. Were they natives?'

'Fortunately not, since they were much larger. But just imagine how you would feel at the club when, after the oysters and bread and butter, your host said: "That is all." Our supper consisted of the same portion of bread and water, with twelve raisins. During the first fifteen days, we had also each a spoonful of brandy; but that soon failed. Upon one occasion, a small dark object was seen rising and falling upon the waves. As we drew nearer, it was found to be a green turtle fast asleep. I never remember enduring such moments of agonising expectation as followed. Directions were given for his capture, but we hardly hoped that so great a blessing should be vouchsafed to us. The man to whom the task was confided probably felt a greater sense of responsibility than that of all the directors of public companies who have ever existed; and as for the rest of us, we held our breath as the moment approached for the execution of his project. If he should miss his grasp, we felt that we should tear him to pieces. Silently we floated up to this floating prize, and the next instant it was hauled aboard by its hind-leg. Jack has likened us to aldermen, but never did aldermen smack their lips over turtle as we did: it was warmed like the dolphins, and then divided. If heaven can be concentrated in a taste, I must surely have experienced it in my thirty-first share of that turtle.'

'It must have been an invidious task to divide it!' observed Helen. 'I suppose the captain did that?'

'The man they had chosen for captain did; for we were only one of three boats, though with the other two we had parted company; and, as it happened, none of the chief officers of the ship were with us. The division, I believe, was made as equal as it could be.'

'Are you sure of that, Tyndall?' observed Jack quietly. 'As the story was told me—though not by yourself—I understood the captain often gave some of his own share to a little lad there was on board.'

'How nice of him!' cried Helen rapturously.

'Well, he was a big, strong man,' said Arthur, 'and the poor child was failing.' 'On the eighteenth day, we caught two "boobies." Never were two boobies so welcome to any joint-stock company; they are about as large as a duck, but mostly bone and feathers. They were not even warmed, for the sea ran too high to admit of our lighting a fire; so we ate them raw, and to the last bone. On the twenty-first day, a dreadful incident

occurred. One of the men—an invalided one too, who was too weak even to take his turn in the watch—leaped suddenly to his feet, and cried: "A sail, a sail!" But it turned out to be only one of our own boats that had drifted across our path after three weeks of absence. They could do nothing for us, of course, nor we for them; but that chance meeting seemed, strangely enough, to increase our sense of loneliness. On all the vast Pacific, there seemed to be no other beings than ourselves and our shipwrecked fellows. That day, we made an observation, and found that we were a thousand miles from where our vessel had been burned. Think of a thousand miles of ocean without a sail! We had been steering for the Clarion Isles, but were now obliged to give up the hope of making them, and altered our course for the Sandwich group. What we suffered for the next three weeks, it is impossible to describe. The pains of hunger would seem incredible even if I could paint them. Curiously enough, what we found most efficacious to divert our minds from the horrors that encompassed us were the descriptions of delicious dinners eaten at home, or the planning of interminable and preposterous bills of fare for dinners that we should eat when we got home again; only the little boy had the good sense to remark that plain bread and butter would be good enough for him, all the days of his life, if he could only get it. You may think I exaggerate, but it is nevertheless a fact that, during this last period of our sufferings, we never slept; nor yet were we wholly awake. Three-fourths of our faculties were in our possession, but the remainder was in dreamland, and made feasts—always feasts—composed of everything imagination could dream of, piled upon long tables, and smoking hot. We fell down, and ravenously seized upon the first dish; and then awoke to find ourselves among our starving comrades, upon the desolate, sailless sea. It is too terrible to recall to mind: let it suffice to say, as an example of the condition to which we were reduced, that, on the twenty-eighth day, our rations were one tea-spoonful of bread-crumbs, and an ounce of ham, for the morning meal; and a tea-spoonful of bread-crumbs only for the evening. On the thirty-eighth day of our troubles, we had nothing left but a pound and a half of ham amongst us. The ham-bone was saved for the next day. For some time before that, we had been cutting our old boots into small pieces, and eating them, and also pounding wet rags into a sort of pulp. After apportioning the ham-bone, the captain cut the canvas cover that had been around the ham into fifteen equal pieces, and each man took his portion. This was the last division of food: but the men broke up the small wooden butter-tub, and divided the staves, and gnawed them up; and also the shell of the little green turtle was scraped with knives, and eaten to the last shaving. As for myself, I remember eating the strap of one boot, and saving the other for the next day.'

'But did you really never think of eating one another, Tyndall?' inquired Allardye—'of drawings lots, I mean, and so forth?'

'The men did so, I believe,' answered Tyndall, hesitating.

'Well; and *you* were one of the men. Come, tell us the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth,' said Allardye; 'unless, indeed,

you wish us to consider yourself the only Hero of this terrible adventure.'

'There was not much heroism in the matter,' said Arthur gravely, but with perfect good-humour, 'because, you see, we could not help ourselves. I am sorry I can't oblige you by any reminiscence of cannibalism; but since you insist upon it, I will allow that some of our people, as they confessed to me afterwards, turned their minds that way. It was felt that one member of the company must soon succumb to his privations, and who that would be we all very well knew.'

'And was the subject of these anticipations aware of them?'

'Yes; he knew that he was being *waited for*, if you *will* have it. But even if he had died, I think the captain would have done his best to avert what those poor wretches were planning. They were not to blame, however, in my opinion, though I did not share their views. On the forty-first day, we sighted land. To give you an idea of our despondency, the "watch below," who were lying in the bottom of the boat, did not so much as stir. They had been disappointed so often by false alarms, that they did not believe the good news. When it was made certain, however, our joy was beyond all bounds. One man even declared that the sight of those green hills was more welcome to him than a day's rations, which, under the circumstances, was surely an extravagant expression.'

'But I am sure, Arthur,' said Helen seriously, 'that you were not only glad, but grateful, when your deliverance thus came at last.'

'Certainly, my dear Helen. But considering that the sky never wore a cloud the less on our account, nor the sea (on which the sun glinted as usual) a billow, I do contend that Nature—*your* Nature—is not a sympathetic personage as regards humanity.'

'You might have proved, however, that Man was sympathetic,' observed Adair, 'if you had not chosen to leave out of your story that incident of the flying-fish.'

'True; I forgot,' said Tyndall. 'When we had been in the boat thirty days, a small flying-fish was caught; so very small, that, like a prime number, it could not be divided at all, or certainly not among one-and-thirty people. So all agreed, since the captain had been pretty hard-worked, that it should be given to him. It may seem a small thing to you, but it was a treasure more valuable than all the gold in Aladdin's cave would have been to whomsoever of us should have gained it; and of course we might have drawn lots for it, and each had his chance. The captain himself very properly pointed this out, and proposed a lottery; but the men—noble fellows that they were—all said— Shall I use their very words, Helen?'

'O yes,' cried Helen, 'by all means. Dear fellows, what *did* they say?'

'Well, they said they would see him d—first.' Arthur rose from his seat, with a light laugh, and was passing out of the cabin, as though to avoid being questioned further, when Adair interposed with: 'Ask him whether the captain took it, Miss Somers.'

'Yes, he *did*,' said Arthur—'took it like a shot; and there ends my story.' And with that he walked forward, and began to question the man in charge of the rope as to their rate of speed.

'The story doesn't end quite there, at least as I have heard it from other lips,' said Jack Adair, taking his friend's place by Helen's side.

'What was there more?' asked she.

'Oh, nothing, except that when the captain took it, he only did so to give it away to the little lad, whom everybody was expecting to die, but whom that little fish kept alive.'

'How very, very noble of him!' exclaimed Helen, flushing up. 'I should like to know that brave man's name.'

'I can tell you,' said Jack in a proud whisper: 'it was one Arthur Tyndall.'

CHAPTER VII.—NEARING HOME.

Never had Helen so admired her lover as at that moment, when another hand thus pointed him out as the hero of his own story; her heart even warmed towards Jack, who was too plain-spoken to recommend himself to her good graces in a general way: she was somewhat spoiled and imperious, and though Arthur (as something told her) would not stand *that*, she liked other men to play at being her slaves. If Tyndall had not already obtained her willing 'yes' in answer to his suit, he might have won it, at that moment, with even greater ease; and she almost regretted that she had it not again to give him. She wished that he would come in from his distant post beside the mast yonder, and hear from her own lips that she had found out—what he would fain have concealed from her—how nobly, generously, unselfishly he had behaved in those awful straits.

But Arthur Tyndall remained at the bow of the barge, sunk once more in those thoughts from which he had been roused to tell his story. He had been glad to tell it, not, indeed, because of the credit which it reflected upon himself—for, as we have seen, he had glossed over his own share in the matter, and was even now ignorant that it had been disclosed—but because it had occupied his mind, into which, wherever there was space, crowded regrets, remorse, forebodings. For the second time within five minutes, he consulted his watch, then, with quite a spasmodic effort, put this commonplace question to the man beside him: 'At the rate, you say, we are going, we ought to be at the *Fisher's Welcome* by six o'clock?'

'About that time, sir; yes.'

'I suppose they do a thriving trade there, as usual?'

'Yes, sir; I should say a smart trade.'

The boatman, like most of his class, was taciturn. If he had been a seaman, he would have had a yarn to tell about that inn which would have drawn out like copper-wire, but being a freshwater man, he only pulled at his pipe. There was one subject, as it happened, about which he could be eloquent enough, but it did not often turn up in conversation, being Ground-bait.

'Do you know the people hereabouts?' inquired Arthur carelessly.

The man shaded his eyes from the sun, and gazed earnestly down the river, as though the population he hoped to recognise were 'floating.'

'Not many on 'em, sir, I expects: yes, there's Mr Crofts yonder for certain; and where he is, Mr Baines ain't far off.'

'I see nobody just here,' said Arthur.

'No, sir; but I knows them two gentlemen are

hereabouts. Look at that pole yonder with the green top. That's Mr Crofts' pole, I'll take my davy. There's a matter of three shillings of ground-bait—if there's a pen'worth—where that pole is. I call him the Champion Perch-fisher of the Thames; and so he is; a nice open-handed gentleman too; only, when anybody else in the same boat chances to hook a bigger fish—O lor! A squirt of tobacco-juice filled up the measure of admiration for which words could not be found.

'But Mr Crofts doesn't live in this neighbourhood, does he?'

'Well, no, sir; he lives in London, I believe, when he ain't on the Thames, which is eight months out of twelve, however. I reckon he spends a hundred and fifty pounds a year upon worms and gentles and such-like: reg'lar chucks 'em into the sea, as the saying is; or, leastways, it's the river. Sometimes he's here, and sometimes at Henley, and sometimes down our way. I don't know the people as *lives* here, except by name; that is, such as Lord Rowley, Squire Perival, and yourself, of course.'

'You know old Jacob Renn, I suppose?'

Something had happened to the rope—the man's attention was wholly occupied for awhile in getting it free from a snag. The time thus spent seemed to Arthur interminable, so impatient was he for the other's reply; and yet, on the other hand, the delay gave him a certain sense of respite. Perhaps he had been imprudent in asking this question, which he had restrained himself from putting to others for many a month, and which, if this fellow had forgotten, he made up his mind not to repeat.

'Old Jacob as used to have the *Welcome*? O yes, I know *him* well enough; him and his pretty gal, Jenny Wren, they called her, as perhaps you remember.'

'Did they?' returned Tyndall. 'I had forgotten that. I have not been at home for these five years. How long did you say it was since they left the *Welcome*?'

'Well, it must be three year come Michaelmas; which I remember by a very curious circumstance. I was out here fishing with Mister Crofts, and a friend of his as had never had a rod in his hand before; and I'm blessed if, just off that very inn, that young gentleman didn't hook a bigger perch than ever Mr Crofts did in his life! What a way the old man was in, to be sure, O lor! I think I can hear him now crying out to old Jacob Renn, upon the shore: "You say it's time you gave up innkeeping, but cus me if it ain't time I gave up fishing."

'Why don't you favour *us* with your conversation, Arthur?' cried a pleading voice from the cabin. 'We have been for some time on as short an allowance of that as your shipwrecked friends were in the matter of turtle, and yet you seem to have a large store of words for others.'

'You are very ungrateful,' returned Tyndall gaily. 'I was only making inquiries about our rate of progress, so that I might be in a position to count the minutes till I should welcome you to Swansdale.'

'Very pretty, but rather too elaborate,' said Helen: 'such a cloud of words is seldom used unless to conceal the truth. Come here, sir, and confess your sins.'

'I should have to invent them,' replied Arthur, whose spirits had risen in a most unaccountable manner: 'I have never committed but a peccadillo or two, which are not worth naming.'

'Oh, I daresay! Mr Adair and Mr Allardyce, who know you, could tell quite another story, I suspect.'

'Yes, yes, another story,' cried Mrs Somers, who had secretly been trying to wake for a considerable time, and imagined that the period had arrived for making such an opportune remark as would prove she had not been asleep at all. They'll tell another story to oblige us, I'm sure.'

With this the whole party made very merry, and urged by the old lady, whose energies were greatly recruited by her nap, the conversation became once more general.

'It is quite pleasant to see you yourself again, Arthur,' said Helen softly. 'Shall I tell you, you naughty boy, what I had almost begun to think?'

'If it was nothing wrong,' returned Arthur comically, 'tell me.'

'Nay, but it was wrong, for it was doing you an injustice. I thought you had begun to regret, just the least bit in the world, that you had given me your heart.'

'My darling, how could you?'

'Well, but I did, and I'll tell you why. It struck me that there was something on your mind—something in connection with the place we were coming to.'

'I was thinking about the old home a bit, love. I have not been there, you know, since I was quite a boy.'

'Yes; but I don't mean that, sir. A man is not a cat, to be so devotedly attached to places.'

Arthur frowned involuntarily. He disliked the petulant air which Helen was apt to assume upon slight occasion; and he disliked her words themselves. If he had in reality no very sentimental feelings with regard to his ancestral home, he did not wish to be told so, and especially when he had laid claim to the possession of them.

'It was a *person*, and not a place, Arthur, that I was afraid you were thinking about. "Suppose," said I to myself, "I should find a rival down at Swansdale!"'

'Why, lor, Arthur, you look quite pale!' cried Mrs Somers. 'That's what comes of smoking so much with your back to the horse.'

Arthur was deadly pale; and though he rallied himself with an effort, and joined in the mirth the old lady's remark had occasioned, his laugh, to the quick ear of love, sounded forced and hollow.

'I am afraid I have made you angry, dear,' whispered Helen fondly. 'I know I do sometimes; and I am always sorry for it afterwards. You are going to marry a very silly girl, I fear, and will have to forgive her much. There, come, you have got your dear bright looks again. Why, of course, I was not serious; or at least only just a little. Is it possible I could think you so wicked as to love anybody else? But there is a young woman, you know, and a very pretty one, not twenty miles from us at this moment, whom you used to flirt with a good deal in the old days. Oh, I've heard all about that, you naughty man!'

'And who told you?' inquired Arthur, straining his lips into a smile. He felt himself growing white again, and it seemed to him that the beating of his heart must needs be heard.

'Why, your friend Mr Adair, of course—Jack, as you call him—who else possesses your secrets? I protest I am quite jealous of that man.'

'Jack Adair?' Jack told you that I used to flirt with somebody down here? That's impossible.'

'I didn't say she was always down here.'

Arthur, who had been almost suffocated, began to breathe again, but still with difficulty; like one recovered from drowning by the Marshall Hall method.

'I said she was within twenty miles of us at the present moment.—Mr Adair, here is Arthur pretending that he has forgotten his cousin Blanche is to meet us at the inn!'

'I am not astonished at his forgetting anybody, under the circumstances,' said Jack gallantly.

'Very good; I'll tell Blanche that,' said Tyndall mischievously.—'Now see Jack blush,' he whispered.

And Jack did blush—from the sun-burned rim of his neck to the roots of his curly brown hair, as he stammered out: 'I was speaking of *you*, Tyndall: I did not say that the rest of the party might be excused from forgetting'—

'Well, *that's* not very complimentary to me—and mamma—you know,' broke in Helen pettishly.

'I beg to say Mr Adair does not speak for *me*, ladies,' observed Mr Allardyce, bowing respectfully.

'No, no; Jack is speaking for himself,' laughed Tyndall. 'Ain't you, Jack?'

This was hard measure to his friend, to whose admiration of Miss Blanche Tyndall he was no stranger; but he owed Adair a grudge for the fright which Helen's words had given him, and the rebound of his own spirits was such that he was not quite so careful of the other's feelings as it was his wont to be. His cousin Blanche was wealthy, and Adair was poor, and the latter had always taken pains to conceal, so far as he could, the tenderness he entertained for her. He could have taken a great revenge upon Arthur had he chosen; but it never entered into his honest mind to do so. He was annoyed, however, and not being quick of speech where his feelings were concerned, though ready enough on other occasions, he remained silent. An uncomfortable pause ensued, during which Arthur felt the pangs of remorse.

'I suppose your cousin Blanche is a great heiress, is she not, Tyndall?' inquired Allardyce carelessly.

'Certainly not an heiress, though her mother, it is true, has money. Even if our friends the bargees had cut the thread of my existence, in return for my attentions to their rope, she would have benefited nothing, since the Swansdale estate—a sardonic smile flitted across Allardyce's features—'such as it is,' added Tyndall reddening, 'is entailed upon heirs-male. It would all go to my cousin Francis, the son of my father's youngest brother. Blanche and he, and Uncle Magus, are the only blood-relations that I possess.'

'Uncle Magus? Why, that's no Christian name surely!' ejaculated Mrs Somers.

'No, madam, it is a surname,' returned Arthur drily, 'and borne by a very honourable man.'

'It means a magician, my dear Mrs Somers,' whispered Allardyce—'probably the Eastern magician spoken of by Mr Adair.'

'And is *he* Arthur's uncle? Oh, my goodness!'

'Hush, yes; but Tyndall is no conjurer himself, you know—far from it.'

'Well, that's a mercy, at all events. And does this Mr Magus live in Egypt, Arthur?'

'In Egypt? No; he lives at Swansdale; and I hope to have the honour of introducing him to you this very evening.'

'But your mother's name was Tyrone, I thought?' said Helen, rather alarmed for the antiquity of the race with which she was about to be allied.

'One of the most respectable families in Ireland, as I have always understood,' added the dowager, raking her proposed son-in-law with her double eyeglass.

'Well, I don't know about its being "respectable,"' laughed Arthur; 'that is a matter of opinion; but it is certainly old enough to know how to behave itself; and yet the House of Tyrone is a fabric of yesterday compared with that of Magus.'

'Came over with the Conqueror, of course,' remarked Allardyce. 'Norman William must have had a big ship.'

'My dear sir,' answered Tyndall compassionately, 'Norman William was a mushroom compared with the first Magus. And this old fellow—a fine figure still, as straight as a pine, though he is over seventy, and six feet three in his stockings—is the last of his race.'

'The longest and the last, eh?' laughed Allardyce. 'You are alarming the ladies, my dear fellow, who now expect to meet a giant as well as a magician. If the country were a little more level, and if he chanced to be standing up, a grove of trees would not, I suppose, be an insuperable obstacle to seeing Uncle Magus from *here*.' Mr Allardyce rounded his hand, and looking through it as though it were a spyglass, exclaimed: 'And, by Jove, there he is!'

'I don't believe it,' cried Mrs Somers, half incredulous, half hysterical. 'Why, you wicked, story-telling man, that's a Maypole!'

'In that case,' said Tyndall, 'we are drawing near the *Angler's Welcome*, for the pole—to shew, I suppose, that there is bait there—stands in front of the inn.'

GREENWICH HOSPITAL.

'FEW of those who now gaze on the noblest of European hospitals are aware that it is a memorial of the virtues of the good Queen Mary, of the love and sorrow of William, and of the great victory of La Hogue.'

When these words were written by Lord Macaulay, Greenwich Hospital was still tenanted by the quaintly dressed representatives of those who, having been wounded by the thousand at La Hogue, were left unattended and uncared for by the public ingratitude. Queen Mary, moved with compassion, set her heart upon providing shelter for her country's defenders, and urged upon her royal consort the propriety of converting one of the spare palaces into a hospital for crippled seamen. 'While she lived, scarcely any step was taken towards the accomplishing of her favourite design; but it should seem that, as soon as her husband had lost her, he began to reproach himself for having neglected her wishes. No time was lost; a plan was furnished by Wren; and soon an edifice, surpassing that asylum which the magnificent Louis had provided for his soldiers, rose on the margin of the Thames.'

The edifice remains; but the long-coated seamen with their three-cornered hats, their artificial limbs, and their marvellous tales of the dangers they had passed—who

Of Nelson and the North
Sang the glorious day's renown,

and to whose yarns of storm and battle confiding juveniles 'did seriously incline'—where are they? No longer they roam about the magnificent corridors, lie basking in the sun, or meet in hall or chapel for common meal and common prayer. A few, a very few remain, too old, too infirm, too much alone in the world, to be suffered to drift from that safe anchorage where no storm can touch them, and where they await in calmness and peace the signal which shall summon them from this world to that which is to come.

There is even a proposal to change the character and the genius of the place, and to convert the asylum for the old into a school for the young. How has all this come about?

On the 25th October 1694, letters-patent were passed under the Great Seal, granting to certain persons a parcel of ground at East Greenwich, 'and the capital messuage commonly called by the name of the Palace of Greenwich, standing upon the said piece or parcel of ground,' to the intent 'that the premises should be converted and employed unto and for the use and service of a hospital for the relief of seamen, their widows and children, and an encouragement of navigation.' On the 10th September 1695, additional letters-patent were issued, constituting the first Commissioners of Greenwich Hospital, and authorising an annual payment out of the Treasury of a sum of money to defray expenses; but this sum being inadequate in itself, and the continuance of the payments being uncertain, the act 7 and 8 William III. c. 21 was passed, providing 'that every seaman whatsoever that shall serve his Majesty, his heirs, or successors, or any other person or persons whatsoever, in any of his Majesty's ships, or in any ship or vessel whatsoever belonging or to belong to any of the subjects of England, or any other his Majesty's dominions, shall allow, and there shall be paid out of the wages of every such seaman to grow due for such his service, sixpence per mensem for the better support of the said hospital, and to augment the revenues thereof for the purposes aforesaid.'

By this act, not only were seamen of the royal navy, for whose exclusive benefit the hospital was afterwards applied, required to pay the Greenwich sixpence, but the seamen of the mercantile marine, who for years received no benefit whatever from the hospital funds, were also called upon to contribute, and that in the same proportion.

The annual grant from the Treasury and the income derived from the Greenwich sixpence floated the royal hospital; but experience shewed, that if the institution was to become the national benefit contemplated by the founders, it would be necessary either to endow it with property, of which the revenues should render it independent to a large extent of external aid, or that its expenses should form a permanent item of the Civil List. Waifs and strays of the public Exchequer were eagerly seized upon for bestowal on Greenwich Hospital. The first of these was netted in the year 1704, when £6472, 1s.—'being money or the proceeds of goods and merchandises

which were taken with William Kidd, a notorious pirate, who was taken and executed several years since,' and which had been, 'on or about the one-and-thirtieth day of January one thousand seven hundred and four, paid into the receipt of the Exchequer, for public uses, by Richard Crawley, Esq. receiver of the goods of pirates and other perquisites of the Admiralty'—were handed over 'to and for the use and benefit of the Royal Hospital for Seamen at Greenwich.'

The next great windfall that came to Greenwich was that which now yields to it a revenue of fifty thousand pounds a year. The young Earl of Derwentwater having been attainted of high-treason and executed in 1715, and his brother, Charles Radcliffe, having also been attainted, though he was not executed for thirty years afterwards, the large landed property belonging to the family in the north of England, together with all the Radcliffe property, became forfeited to the crown. The notion of putting such property into the public treasury was getting to be thought antiquated, and fortunately it happened that political and personal jealousy ran too high to allow of a grant being made of it to any private person or favourite. For twenty years it remained in the hands of the sovereign; but in 1735, an act of parliament (8 Geo. II. c. 29) was passed, by which, after payment of certain mortgages and certain annuities, the Derwentwater estates were vested in trustees on behalf of Greenwich Hospital.

This same act gave to merchant-seamen 'maimed in fight against any enemy whatsoever of his Majesty,' the same benefits of Greenwich as were enjoyed by seamen of the royal navy.

Excepting a grant of thirty thousand pounds made in 1749 out of the estate for the relief of the children of Charles Radcliffe, brother of the earl beheaded in 1715, the Derwentwater property has remained in the hands of Greenwich Hospital up to the present time, notwithstanding repeated efforts to win it again for the family, including the proceedings taken some three years since by the eccentric lady calling herself Countess of Derwentwater.

The annual proceeds of these endowments, and the fund formed by the Greenwich sixpence, constituted for many years the spending income of Greenwich. The great French war added several other sources of supply. Prize-money remaining unclaimed after three years was ordered to be given to the hospital; the shares due to deserters and 'run men' were afterwards added; privateers' men, and men in ships carrying letters of marque, were required to pay the sixpence a month from wages; thirty-three shillings and fourpence per hundred pounds on the value of prizes, droits of Admiralty, and bounty-money, was apportioned for the special purpose of giving officers pensions out of Greenwich funds; fines recoverable under the acts for the better regulation and government of seamen in the merchant-service, were made payable to Greenwich; and a heavy percentage was charged upon all money received by Her Majesty's ships for the conveyance of freight, the amount so charged going to the hospital. In 1817, doubt having arisen as to whether the several percentages payable were permanently payable or only during the war, and question having also arisen as to the extent of the percentage, an act was passed declaring the perpetuity of the payments, and fixing them at 5 per

cent. upon the value of all prizes taken, upon all grants to the navy and marines, upon all bounty-money, and seizures 'under the Revenue, Colonial, Navigation, or Slave Abolition Laws,' and upon all rights of Admiralty.

Out of the handsome income provided from the above-named sources, accommodation was found for about two thousand seamen within the walls of Greenwich Hospital ; the expenses of a school for the education of eight hundred sons of seamen were defrayed ; the wives and children of seamen slain in the service were provided for ; pensions to officers who had served long and well in the navy were allotted ; pensions to seamen who had done well, and had yet not been disabled, were authorised, under an act of the fifty-fifth of George III. ; and finally, under an act passed in the early part of the same king's reign, a certain number of out-pensioners were sustained out of the funds of the hospital.

Such, then, were the sources of revenue, such the persons relieved out of them, under the various acts relating to Greenwich Hospital—passed up to the end of the great war. With long years of peace, not only did the demands upon the institution decrease, but the income, always in excess of requirements, improved and accumulated to a very considerable extent ; so much so, indeed, that another and very important source of revenue was found in the dividends arising from the investment of some three millions of pounds. The Derwent-water estates improved greatly in value, and the general condition of the hospital property was so good, as to enable it to dispense in 1829 with the payment of the Greenwich sixpence by seamen of the navy, and, in 1834, by the seamen of the mercantile marine. In 1865, the income of the hospital was upwards of one hundred and fifty thousand pounds a year, of which the Derwent-water estates yielded fifty thousand pounds.

It was found that while this princely income was in excess of the necessary expenditure, there was no power in the commissioners of the hospital materially to increase the beneficial scope of the institution. At the same time, it was found that the number of the inmates steadily decreased. Inquiry, directed in 1859, reported these facts, and also 'the unwillingness of many seamen of the most valuable class to enter Greenwich Hospital.' In explanation of the last fact, the commissioners stated that 'this superb palace, with its long galleries and spacious colonnades, must, from the nature of the institution, become intolerably wearisome to men who are not totally incapable of taking part in any occupation or amusement. . . . It is not surprising that old sailors so circumstanced should resort to the alehouse, or to worse places.'

The conclusions arrived at by a departmental committee in 1863, and embodied in a memorandum by the Duke of Somerset in 1864, were decidedly to the effect that the hospital no longer promoted the objects for which it was founded, and that 'this great charitable institution supplies very inadequately those wants which the national generosity would desire to meet.'

The avidity with which pensioners availed themselves of a newly created privilege of so much leave of absence with pension in advance, to enable them to visit their friends, gave the cue to the direction which thoroughly beneficial reform should

take. The memorandum already referred to pointed out that 'the great body of pensioners can only obtain the advantages of a residence in this institution by the sacrifice of that perfect freedom, domestic comfort, and social independence, which no Englishman would willingly resign,' and proposed that none but the helpless, and infirm, and friendless, should be retained at the hospital, the whole of the remaining pensioners being sent with enlarged pensions to their homes ; and that the general number of out-pensioners should be greatly and immediately increased.

The suggestions made in this memorandum were, with slight modifications of detail, embodied in an act of parliament in July 1865, and have been found most beneficial in their operation. Greenwich Hospital was untenanted of all but the infirm, who—by an arrangement which, recognising the claims of the merchant-seamen who had so long contributed to Greenwich funds, placed a portion of the hospital at the disposal of the *Dreadnought* committee—were placed in charge of the Merchant Seamen's Society. The income of Greenwich Hospital was redistributed in out-pensions to an extent which carried the benefits of the institution to the utmost possible limits ; a sum of four thousand pounds a year was also set aside for the benefit of infirm and disabled merchant-seamen ; due provision was made for securing perpetual payment of the existing classes of pension to officers and seamen, and for the proper maintenance and relief of men in time of war. Sick and wounded may, under the new arrangements, be received at Greenwich, or maintained at other hospitals at the expense of Greenwich funds.

It would seem that the latter course is the most likely one to be adopted, for the Lords of the Admiralty, with whom is the control of Greenwich Hospital, have recently decided that the splendid palace which William raised as a monument to his beloved Mary, and which has been untenanted for six years, shall be appropriated to the purposes of a naval university.

LOVE'S IMPOTENCE.

She was the fairest, gentlest thing
That ever bore the weight of pain ;
To-day I laid her in her grave,
There where the west winds weep and rave.
My child, thou shalt not weep again.

Oh ! what is love that cannot shield,
Or spare its love a single woe !
Silent, I watched the deadly strife,
The world's great pain, and her young life,
And, helpless, could not ward a blow.

It was not in the open field
Of earthly pain and poverty,
For there her hand I could have led,
And held my shield above her head,
To save my little one, or die.